

DRAFT Drywood Conservation Area

**Ten Year Area Management Plan
FY 2015 – 2024**



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OVERVIEW

- **Official Area Name:** Drywood Conservation Area, # 9229
- **Year of Initial Acquisition:** 1991
- **Acreage:** 100 acres
- **County:** Barton
- **Division with Administrative Responsibility:** Wildlife Division, Southwest Region
- **Division with Maintenance Responsibility:** Wildlife Division, Southwest Region
- **Statements of Purpose:**

A. Strategic Direction

Drywood Conservation Area (CA) is managed primarily for upland wildlife habitat and for providing hunting and fishing opportunities. It is managed for wildlife associated with grassland, old field, woodland, and forest resources with an emphasis on upland game. Aquatic resources are managed in an effort to maximize recreational sport fishing opportunities. Management emphasis is placed on maintaining and protecting the wetland/floodplain boundaries as defined upon acceptance of this property. Habitat management also targets white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, northern bobwhite quail, rabbits and other ground nesting birds.

B. Desired Future Condition

The desired future condition includes woodland natural communities, diverse grassland and old field communities, and aquatic features managed to provide benefits for native flora and fauna and recreational opportunity within the parameters of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Covenant (Appendix A).

C. Federal Aid Statement

This area, or a portion thereof, was acquired with USDA Farm Service Agency funds and donated to the State to provide fish and wildlife benefits and land conservation.

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

I. Special Considerations

- A. **Priority Areas:** Western Cherokee Grasslands Conservation Opportunity Area (COA)
- B. **Natural Areas:** None

II. Important Natural Features and Resources

- A. **Species of Conservation Concern:** None observed.
- B. **Caves:** None
- C. **Springs:** None

III. Existing Infrastructure

- gravel parking area and gate
- two-acre fishing pond (Drywood Pond)

IV. Area Restrictions or Limitations

- A. Deed Restrictions or Ownership Considerations:** In the acceptance of these lands, the Department of Conservation (the Department) must abide by covenants set forth by the United States of America, Secretary of Agriculture. See Appendix A for general covenants and covenants pertaining to wetlands and floodplains.
- B. Federal Interest:** Uses of land acquired with federal funds may not interfere with the purpose for which it was acquired. Federal funds may also be used in the management of this land. Fish and wildlife agencies may not allow recreational activities and related facilities that would interfere with the purpose for which the State is managing the land. Other used may be acceptable and must be assessed in each specific situation.
- C. Easements:** None
- D. Cultural Resource Findings:** None
- E. Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** None
- F. Endangered Species:** None
- G. Boundary Issues:** None

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

V. Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations

Drywood CA is one of 19 public and several privately owned areas identified within the Western Cherokee Grasslands COA. This COA is identified as being the best place in Missouri to manage and restore functioning tall-grass prairie landscapes.

Challenges and Opportunities:

Preventing open areas from being dominated by woody vegetation and invasive species such as fescue (*Festuca arundinacea*) and sericea lespeza (*Lespedeza cuneata*) is the primary challenge on this area.

Management Objective 1: Maintain open areas, increase vegetative structure and diversity and provide critical habitat for quail, grassland birds and other native wildlife species. (Wildlife)

Strategy 1: Reduce or eliminate fescue in old field locations and replace with Missouri ecotype native warm-season grass and forbs.

Strategy 2: Maintain a disturbance regime using prescribed fire, mowing, and disking in the old fields and grassland fields. These areas are not to remain idle for more than three consecutive years.

Strategy 3: Identify invasive species populations and use appropriate methods to control or eliminate them on a regular basis.

Management Objective 2: Maintain wetland/floodplain as defined in the agreement with the Farmers Home Administration (FHA) upon acquisition. (Wildlife)

Strategy 1: Maintain boundary locations using steel post with signs, defining the wetland/floodplain boundary on the ground.

Strategy 2: Adhere to the written specifications governing this wetland/floodplain location (See Appendix A).

Management Objective 3: Manage woodland for wildlife habitat. (Forestry)

Strategy 1: Identify stand management needs for desired habitat structure.

Strategy 2: Implement management techniques to meet desired habitat structure.

Strategy 3: Follow Forestry best management practices (BMPs) while implementing management techniques.

Management Objective 4: Improve adjoining private landowner relationships and awareness. (Private Land Services)

Strategy 1: Provide educational and cost-share opportunities to adjoining landowners of Drywood CA, and those within the Dry Wood Creek watersheds.

Strategy 2: Provide adjoining landowners with information on BMPs for grasslands, scattered tracts of timber, and riparian areas of the Dry Wood Creek watershed.

VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Drywood CA is located in the West Osage River Basin. Aquatic features consist of two ponds (Drywood Pond and a 0.15-acre unnamed pond) and 1.1 miles of small streams.
- 2) Drywood Pond provides anglers the opportunity to pursue largemouth bass, bluegill and channel catfish.
- 3) A private impoundment is located immediately upstream of Drywood Pond, and has the potential to introduce other fish species.

- 4) The conservation area contains approximately 0.5 miles of East Fork Drywood Creek. At this location, the stream is a third-order stream and drains just over 25,500 acres to the southeast, which includes the town of Liberal, Missouri.

Management Objective 1: Maintain or enhance fishing opportunities at Drywood Pond. (Fisheries and Wildlife)

Strategy 1: Continue to monitor the largemouth bass and bluegill populations through periodic fish surveys. Apply appropriate management techniques to maintain or enhance these populations.

Strategy 2: Continue to stock supplemental channel catfish at a rate of 10 to 20 fish per acre per year (with 8 to 12 inch fish) to maintain the channel catfish population.

Strategy 3: Monitor the aquatic vegetation coverage and apply aquatic herbicides as needed.

Strategy 4: Ensure that proper fishing regulation signs are posted at the parking lot and the pond.

Management Objective 2: Maintain Drywood Pond's dam, principal spillway, emergency spillway and angler access. (Wildlife and Fisheries)

Strategy 1: Brush hog or mow the pond dam periodically to prohibit the establishment of woody plants and trees on the dam.

Strategy 2: Periodically inspect the principal spillway pipe for blockages. Remove them accordingly.

Strategy 3: Ensure the integrity of the emergency spillway by monitoring it for erosion and gully formation. Address any issues in a timely manner.

Strategy 4: Maintain the angler access points around the pond through brush hogging or mowing.

Management Objective 3: Manage riparian woodlands for aquatic and terrestrial wildlife resource benefits. (Forestry, Fisheries, Wildlife)

Strategy 1: Evaluate and, as needed, expand riparian corridors to a width of at least 100 feet on both sides of East Fork Drywood Creek. Allow natural regeneration or plant suitable native woody vegetation. Exotic and invasive species should be managed using current invasive species policies.

Strategy 2: For first and second order streams, allow natural regeneration or plant native woody vegetation to vegetate the riparian corridors to minimum of 50 feet on both sides.

Strategy 3: Implement stream management BMPs on all area streams as outlined in the *Watershed and Stream Management Guidelines for Lands and Waters*

Managed by the Missouri Department of Conservation (Missouri Department of Conservation, 2009).

Strategy 4: Identify stand management needs for desired habitat structure.

VII. Public Use Management Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Drywood CA provides hunting opportunities for deer and upland wildlife. Fishing opportunities are restricted to one pond.
- 2) Drywood CA has had issues with littering, illegal drug and alcohol use, as well as routine wildlife violations.

Management Objective 1: Provide unharvested grain, legumes and grasses (food plots) or native seed plantings for area users to readily observe deer, turkey and quail. (Wildlife)

Strategy 1: Using the agricultural crop system and area staff, plant and leave approximately 2-5 acres of small grains and/or clover in small plots in appropriate locations.

Management Objective 2: Maintain a safe and inviting area for public use.

Strategy 1: Maintain parking area and area information signs.

Strategy 2: Mow grass paths for fishing access around the pond on a routine basis.

Strategy 3: Maintain a diverse law enforcement presence including routine patrol, group patrol, covert patrol, and cooperative assistance with other law enforcement agencies.

Strategy 4: Address specific violations such as illegal access, violations of firearms restrictions and violation of 10 p.m. – 4 a.m. closure regulations. Other non-resource violations, such as illegal drug use and distribution, littering, and property damage, should be targeted as well. The above violations should be targeted through the normal enforcement activities, as well as in cooperation with other law enforcement agencies.

MANAGEMENT TIMETABLE

Strategies are considered ongoing unless listed in the following table:

	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Terrestrial Resource Management										
Objective 1										
Strategy 1	X	X								
Objective 2										
Strategy 1	X					X				
Aquatic Resource Management										
Objective 1										
Strategy 1	X			X			X			X

APPENDICES

Area Background:

The mix of woodlands, grasslands, open water and crop/oldfields provides a diversity of habitat for various avian species (northern bobwhite quail, grasshopper sparrows, eastern wild turkey, scissor-tail flycatchers, various waterfowl and raptors), mammals (white-tailed deer, rabbits, squirrels, coyotes, beaver and striped skunks), and reptiles and amphibians (three-toed box turtles, snapping turtles, ornate box turtles, spring peepers, northern cricket frogs and various snakes).

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Miles	% of Area
Bottomland/Riparian Forest	57.3		57
Old Fields/Upland Fields	24.8		25
Cropland/Hayland	15.7		16
Impounded Water	2.2		2
Total	100		100
Stream Frontage (first order and above)		1.1	

References:

Missouri Department of Conservation. (2009). *Watershed and stream management guidelines for lands and waters managed by Missouri Department of Conservation*. Jefferson City, Missouri: Missouri Department of Conservation.

Maps:

Figure 1: Drywood CA Area Map

Figure 2: Wetland/Floodplain Boundary Map

Figure 3: Habitat Map

Other Appendices:

Appendix A: Restrictive Covenants

Figure 1: Drywood CA Area Map

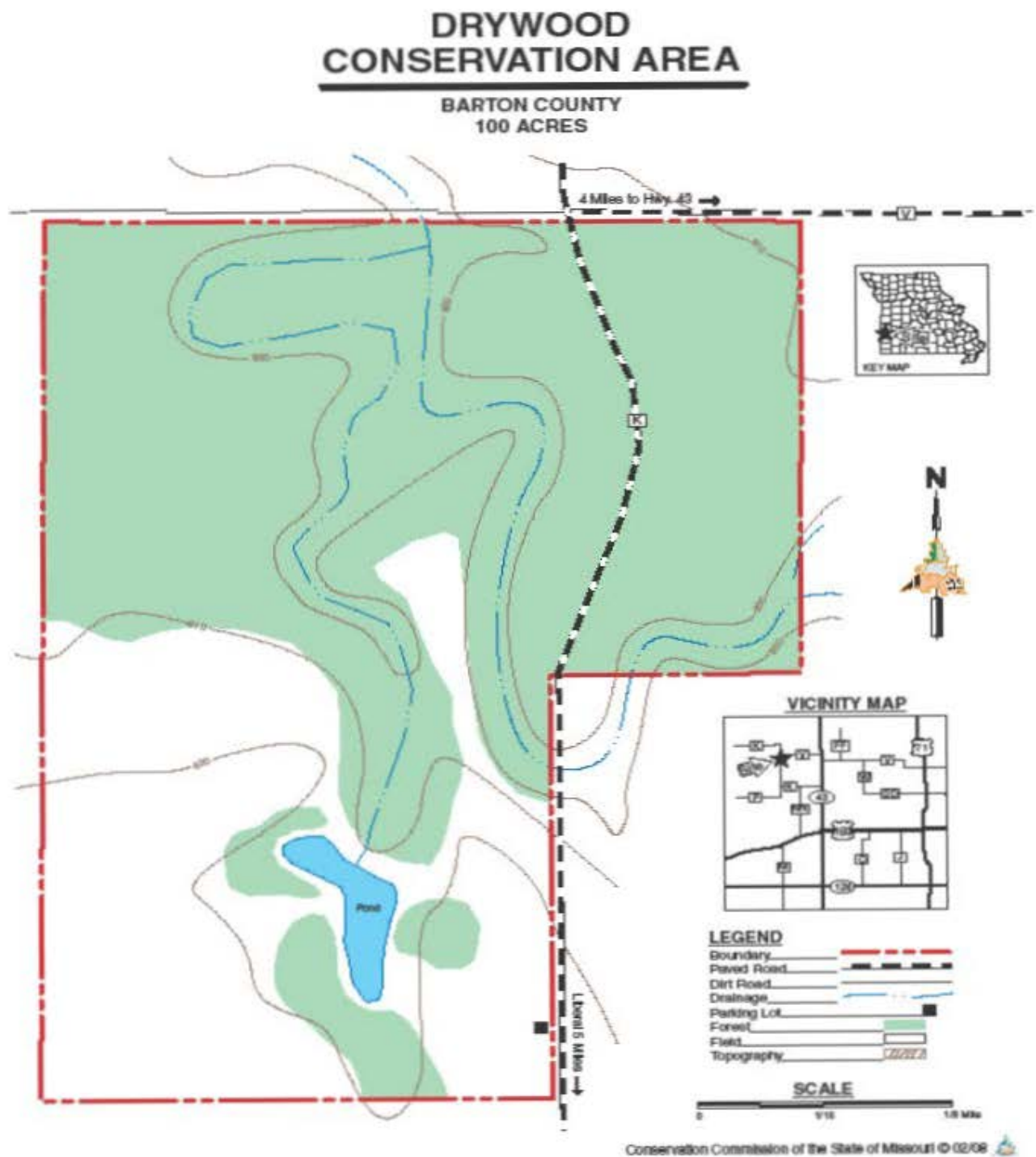


Figure 2: Wetland/Floodplain Boundary Map

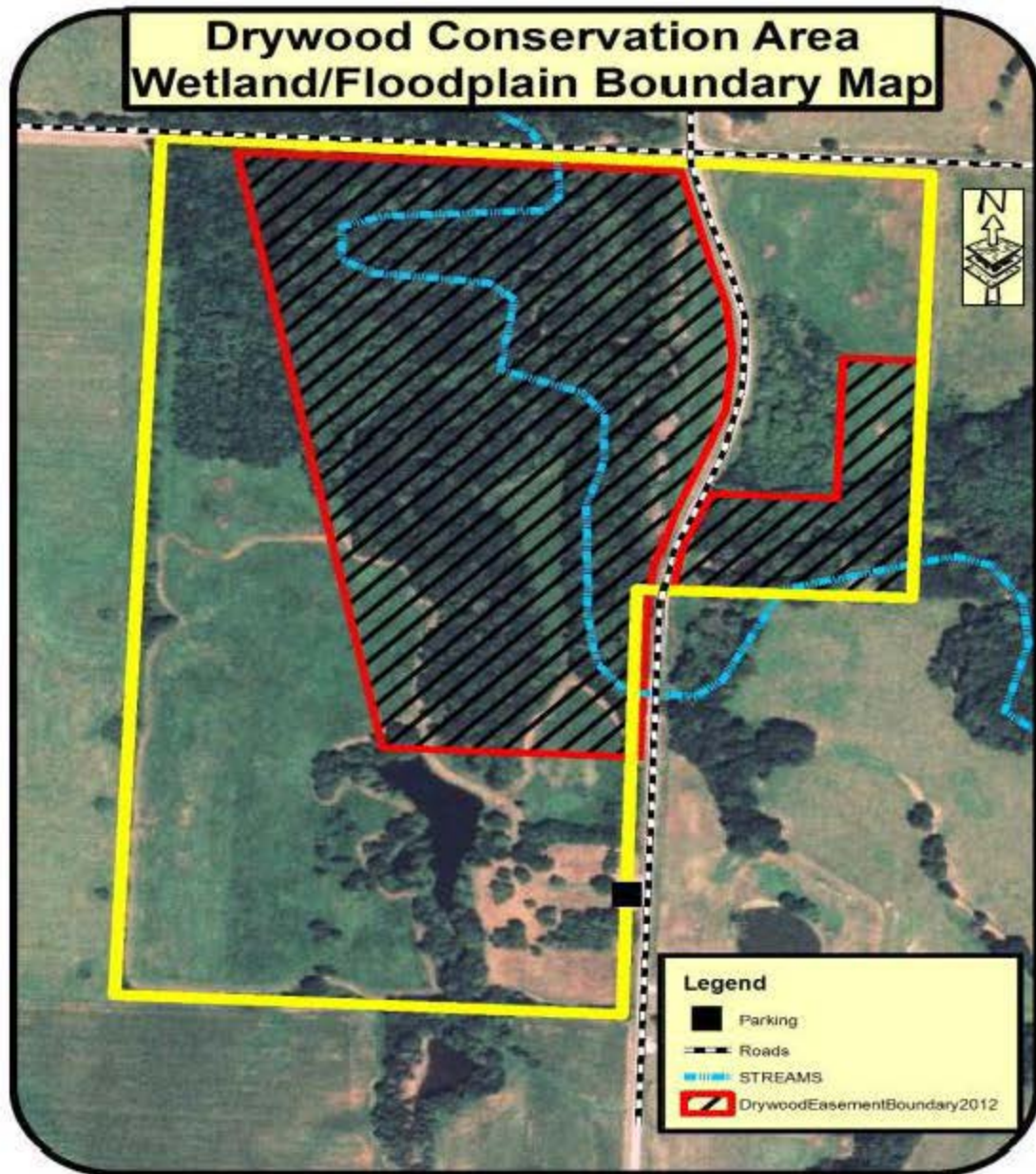
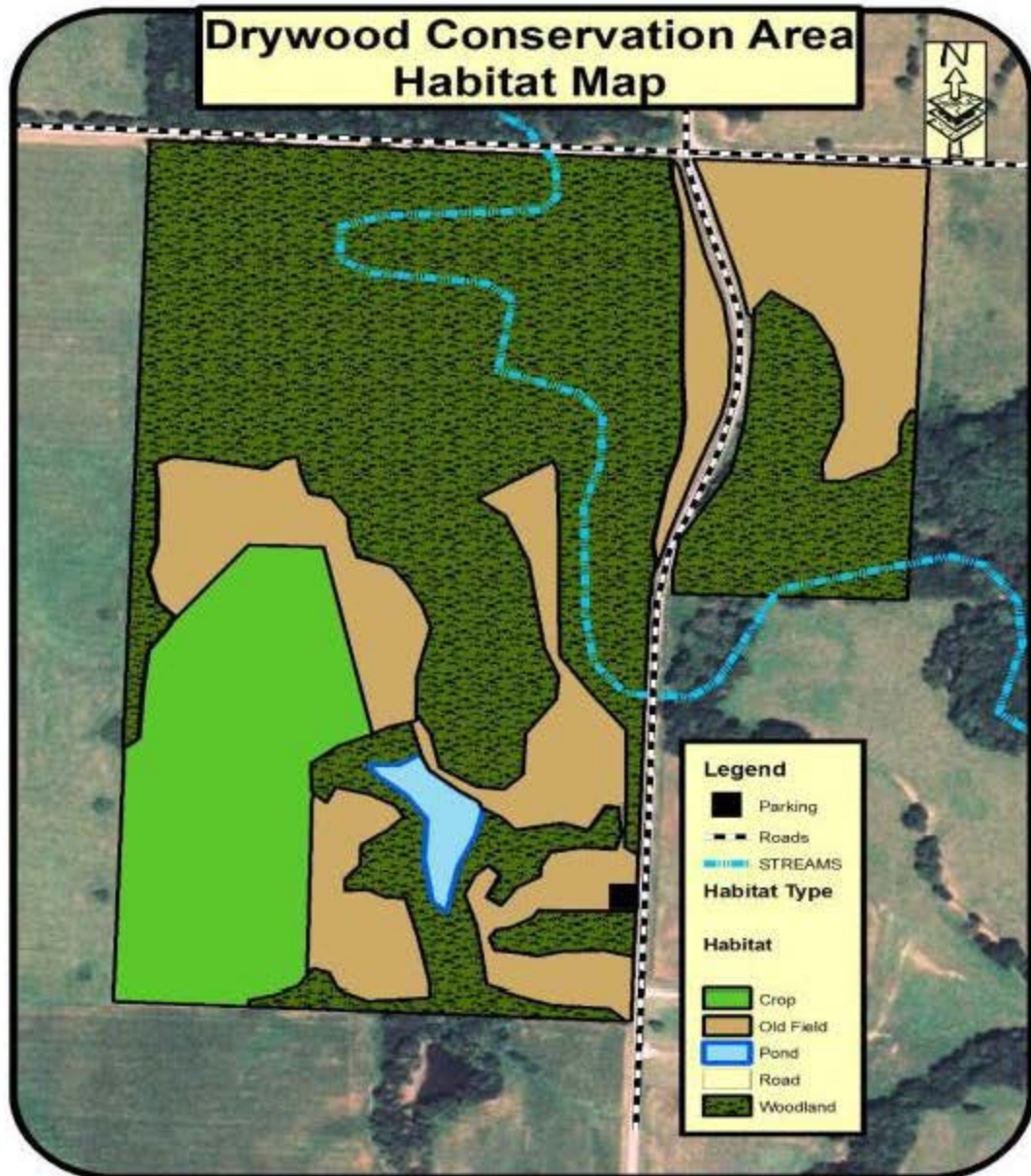


Figure 3: Habitat Map



Appendix A: Restrictive Covenants

The following are the Restrictive Covenants defined by Secretary of Agriculture acting through the Farmers Home Administration.

General Covenants:

- 1.) The land shall not be subdivided.
- 2.) The land shall be perpetually managed for the maintenance of fish and wildlife habitat, the conservation of soil and water, and maintenance of the natural plant species and ecology of the area.
- 3.) Public use and recreation may be allowed on the area consistent with the dominant uses for fish and wildlife and the conservation of the natural environment of the area.
- 4.) Structures and improvements shall not be placed on the property except as are consistent with the purposes of the easement and these general covenants.

Covenants Pertaining to Wetlands and Floodplains:

- 1.) The wetland characteristics of the land shall not be altered by draining, dredging, channeling, filling, discing, pumping, diking, impounding and related activities.
- 2.) Dwellings, barns, outbuildings or other structures shall not be built within the 100 year floodplain of the area (except those useful or necessary to achieve conservation objectives).
- 3.) The vegetation or hydrology of any wetland within the area shall not be altered in any way or by any means including cutting or mowing, cultivation, grazing, harvesting wood products, burning, placing of refuse and wastes, provided that manipulation of the vegetation and water levels to maintain wildlife habitat or other conservation objectives is permitted if done pursuant to a written wetland management plan.

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